

COMMERCIAL STREET TASK FORCE MEETING

REVISED

September 9, 2009

6:30 p.m.

Busch Building - Room L45

MEMBERS Nicholas Ibarra, Chair; Doug Burlison; Mike MacPherson; Cindy Stephens; Lyle Foster;
PRESENT: Steve Weimer; Mary Collette; Rusty Worley; Phyllis Ferguson; Mark Davis; Pauletta Dunn;
Bob Pilkington; Jim Harriger; and Jack Pugh.

MEMBERS

ABSENT: Cynthia Rushefsky, and Laura Derrick.

STAFF

PRESENT: Ralph Rognstad, and Vern Morgan, Planning and Development; and Anita Baker Climer, City Clerk's Office.

GUESTS: Miles Sweeney, Retired-Circuit Court Judge/Meeting Mediator; Donnie Rodgers, Urban Districts Alliance; Michelle Garand and Randy McCoy, Continuum of Care; Garry Brixey, and Tom Smith, Shop/Business Owners; Ted O'Neill, Midtown; Lynn Remmack, Grant Beach Neighborhood/Victory Mission; Ida Barry, and Forrest Brown, Citizens; Anita Kuhns, Grant Beach Neighborhood; Jill Denton, Commercial Street Merchant; Victoria, and Alan Queen, Victory Mission; Rorie Orgeron, The Kitchen, Inc.; and Kary Booher, Springfield News Leader.

Nicholas Ibarra called the meeting to order at approximately 6:35 p.m., and welcomed everyone.

The Task Force reviewed the meeting minutes of September 2, 2009.

Doug Burlison moved to approve the September 2, 2009 meeting minutes as presented.

Mary Collette seconded the motion, and it was approved.

Mr. Ibarra noted that the Task Force's Schedule of Meetings has been revised, and that the Continuum of Care presentation would be held during next week's meeting. He added that the meeting schedule has been extended for one week. *(Please refer to Exhibit A located within the City Clerk's Office for additional information.)*

Miles Sweeney, Circuit Court Judge, was Mediator/Arbitrator/Facilitator during tonight's meeting. He briefly referred to and discussed the Task Force Ground Rules. *(Please refer to Exhibit B located within the City Clerk's Office for additional information.)*

Mark Davis arrived at approximately 6:40 p.m.

Following further discussion by Judge Sweeney, Jim Harriger, Springfield Victory Mission, gave a PowerPoint presentation entitled "Yesterday and Today." *(Please refer to Exhibit C located within the City Clerk's Office for additional information.)*

The following is an outline of tonight's presentation:

- A. Springfield Victory Mission "Our History"
- B. Eliminating Poverty from the Inside Out
- C. How is the Springfield Victory Mission Different?

- D. Local Poverty Fighting Agencies
- E. Our Mission
- F. Explanation of services offered
- G. Victory Trade School
- H. Hospitality
- I. Programs, i.e. PREP Program
- J. Victory House
- K. Collaborations
- L. Victory Square
- M. Victory Transitions
- N. Victory Lodge
- O. Ministry Center
- P. Cook's Kettle
- Q. Victory Chapel
- R. Family Ministries
- S. Warehouse
- T. Cooperations
- U. Victory Vintage
- V. Recent Awards
- W. The Future
- X. Community Focus 2007 – Stats & Findings
- Y. Families in Poverty
- Z. 5-Year Growth in Free & Reduced Luncheons
- AA. Economic Challenge of Springfield, MO.
- BB. GlenCastle in Atlanta, Georgia
- CC. Proposed Dormitory/hotel - Victory Lodge
- DD. Ministry in Motion
- EE. Spiritual Life Center
- FF. Victory Trade School
- GG. Victory Square
- HH. Questions

During the presentation, Mr. Harriger reported that the Springfield Victory Mission is a not-for-profit organization, which is incorporated and governed by a Board of Directors. He briefly addressed that the Springfield Victory Mission currently has five locations within the City at this time, and partners with several other organizations within the area, such as OACAC, Ozarks Food Harvest, and The Kitchen, Inc. to help fight the issue of poverty and homelessness within the community.

Mr. Harriger stated that the mission statement of the Springfield Victory Mission is:

Victory Mission is a nondenominational, evangelical ministry sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ through emergency and educational services that lead to long-term reconciliation, rehabilitation and re-entry into society.

Mr. Harriger briefly discussed that the Springfield Victory Mission tries to help educate and train individuals, who are homeless and in poverty stricken conditions, to help improve and better their lives within society. He stated that the Springfield Victory Mission is there to “fill a need.”

Mr. Harriger explained a proposal of the Springfield Victory Mission for a four-story structure, Victory Lodge, that could reside at the northwest corner of Boonville Avenue and Pacific Street, which would house approximately a 210-bed dormitory/hotel/”hostel” facility for homeless men.

Mr. Harriger reiterated that the proposed Victory Lodge facility would be four floors, not seven as rumored.

Mr. Harriger briefly addressed that the proposed facility would provide housing for the Springfield Victory Mission's trade school and would include an enclosed courtyard area for occupants. He noted that the proposed facility is needed near the other Springfield Victory Mission facilities. Mr. Harriger noted that the proposed would be a "sober facility," and that alcohol would not be allowed.

Mr. Harriger noted that housing for woman and children at the Springfield Victory Mission is needed at this time.

Following the presentation, Mr. Harriger responded to questions posed by the Task Force.

Steve Weimer briefly addressed the "Good Neighbor Coalition," who created a formal "Good Faith Agreement" involving The Kitchen, Springfield Victory Mission, Commercial Club, and the Midtown Neighborhood Association.

Mr. Wiemer briefly explained that he feels that the "negative impacts" that could occur to the surrounding area regarding Mr. Harriger's proposal should be further addressed.

Mr. Harriger briefly addressed that the Springfield Victory Mission cannot control all homeless individuals, especially those not directly under its watch. He noted that his staff does try to monitor the areas around/near the facilities.

Mr. Harriger reported that the Springfield Victory Mission helped over 83,000 individuals in 2008 within the community. He added that this figure did not include housing. Mr. Harriger noted that this figure includes families and individuals that received food and clothing assistance only from the Springfield Victory Mission. He briefly addressed that the Springfield Victory Mission (Victory House, Victory Square, & Victory Trade School Dormitory) has a total of approximately 178 beds at this time.

Mr. Harriger briefly addressed that if his proposal is approved in the future, the beds at the Victory Square (approximately 75) would be available for only women and children to occupy.

The Task Force continued to discuss Mr. Harriger's proposal.

Mr. Harriger noted that the Springfield Victory Mission does not own any residence or facility on Lyon Street at this time. He added that the individuals that the Springfield Victory Mission serves are mainly within Greene County. Mr. Harriger stated that "individuals come from wherever they come from" to the Springfield Victory Mission, and are in need of shelter assistance.

Mr. Harriger noted that the Springfield Victory Mission is proposing to construct this project on Commercial Street, because "you construct where you own."

Mr. Harriger reported that he does not know the zoning regarding the area surrounding the GlenCastle project in Atlanta, Georgia at this time. He added that the point regarding the GlenCastle project was that the community of Atlanta came together to help construct/rehab something for individuals who were homeless, and in need of housing.

Mr. Harriger discussed that feels that the definition of a "hostel" is a dormitory-like hotel where travelers may pay a small payment/fee, such as \$10.00-15.00 a night, to stay; however, a voucher could be given to an individual who cannot afford to stay. He addressed that local churches provide vouchers for stranded individuals to stay in a hotel/motel that can't afford to stay otherwise at this time. Mr. Harriger noted that there are no restrictions regarding how many vouchers a hotel/motel can receive or any limitations on vouchers at this time.

Mr. Harriger briefly addressed that he feels that the Victory Mission is trying to be "the solution to homelessness" within the community.

Mr. Harriger reported that the Springfield Victory Mission would comply with the City's parking requirements and regulations. He added that if additional parking would be needed, then the Springfield Victory Mission would possibly try to obtain some parking from the Assembly of God, which is located near the area, especially during the evening hours.

Mr. Harriger reiterated that that the staff of the Springfield Victory Mission tries to monitor the areas around their facilities, and the residents try to keep the area clean of trash/litter in the community.

Mr. Harriger noted that the Springfield Victory Mission charges approximately \$10.00 a night for a male individual to stay in a room at the Victory Square at this time, which the individuals pay for them to stay. He added that depending upon the market rate he would be expecting that the costs for a room per night at the proposed "hostel" would be approximately \$10.00-\$15.00 a night.

Rusty Worley, UDA, questioned whether or not the proposed facility would be like the "European" model where college kids who are traveling across the country on bikes or is the proposed more of an extension of social services that the Victory Mission would be offering.

Mr. Harriger stated that he doesn't have the facility at this time, so he can't market it yet. He added that the Victory Mission would consider joining the American Hostel Association, which would help market the rooms.

Several of the Task Force members voiced concerns, such as safety, regarding the proposed facility.

Mr. Harriger reported that the proposed would be a "sober facility." He noted that the drawings are just preliminary, which could be modified. Mr. Harriger stated that the proposed is "not a final plan."

Mary Collette briefly explained that she doesn't feel that the Springfield Victory Mission is honoring the formal 1996 "Good Faith Agreement" between the Springfield Victory Mission and the neighborhood organizations, which recognized the concerns of the neighborhoods and pledge not to expand the services they offer in their current locations on Commercial Street.

Mr. Harriger addressed that in 1998, the Springfield Victory Mission decided that they could not be part of a "one sided" agreement. He added that the agreement was "torched," after a letter by Midtown that apparently asked Senator Kit Bond to impede the Kitchen Inc. from receiving federal funding. Mr. Harriger stated "that doesn't sound very neighborly at all to me."

Ms. Collette noted that the letter by Midtown also requested that outstanding warrants and background checks be conducted regarding the residents. She added that this request has been implemented.

Mr. Harriger reported that part of the beds regarding the proposed would be available to students who are attending the Victory Trade School.

Mr. Harriger briefly discussed that the issue of homelessness is a concern across the country at this time. He stated that we are a "hub" city, and individuals go to "hub" cities to find and locate services, such as education, medical, shopping, and sports, etc. Mr. Harriger addressed that our area does not have the amount of homelessness compared to other parts of the country.

Mr. Harriger reported that the budget for the Springfield Victory Mission is approximately \$2.3 million, which approximately 60% comes from donations/donors, and the remaining 40% comes from recycling, the vintage store revenues, the Cook's Kettle Restaurant, and the room rents at the Victory Square, etc.

Mr. Harriger briefly addressed that the Springfield Victory Mission located on Commercial Street during the early 1980's, because the property was "cheap." He added that the Springfield Victory Mission have invested resources and monies into the properties on Commercial Street.

Mr. Harriger reported that if the City Council would be willing to do the things necessary to create proper zoning for a "hostel" or an emergency shelter that isn't out in some industrial area that requires organizations to buy buses to get to and from there, the Victory Mission would consider locating the proposed "hostel" elsewhere.

The Task Force continued to discuss the proposed, as well as the issue of safety or "negative impacts."

Mr. Harriger noted that representatives from the Continuum of Care would be giving a presentation next week regarding the issue of homelessness.

Mr. Harriger briefly discussed that once an individual has completed their training at the Victory Trade School, the Springfield Victory Mission does not necessarily keep up with them regarding where they relocate too, anymore than other higher education institutions do.

Mark Davis reported that he feels that during the meetings of the Task Force, both sides are being too careful in their reporting and that more answers should be addressed.

Mr. Harriger noted that there would be no control regarding when the residents of the proposed "hostel" would come and go, just like a regular hotel/motel; however, the resident would have to go past a front desk area.

Alan Queen, Springfield Victory Mission, reported that there is no curfew for residents at the facility within Grant Beach Neighborhood at this time; however, the residents are required to pass the front desk area when leaving and arriving the facility. He noted that most of the residents that leave in evening hours are to attend work, not really to socialize.

Lynn Remmack, Springfield Victory Mission, briefly discussed that there has been only one incident that has been observed regarding a surrounding town's law enforcement bringing two drunken individuals for drop off on Commercial Street, which was taken care of by the Springfield Police Department due to behavioral issues by the two individuals.

The Task Force continued to discuss the issue of safety concerns, especially the well being of woman and children within the Commercial Street area.

Bob Pilkington noted that he feels that if the perception of safety on Commercial Street changes, it will be impossible to revitalize the Commercial Street area in the future.

Ms. Collette briefly reported that she feels that balance is needed on Commercial Street.

Mr. Worley noted that he believes that there are approximately 60 lofts/apartments that have been renovated, which amounts to approximately 100-120 residents living in lofts/apartments on/near Commercial Street at this time.

Following further discussion, Mr. Ibarra gave an opportunity for members of the public to briefly make comments/remarks.

Anita Kuhns, Vice President-Grant Beach Neighborhood Association, briefly discussed that the residents from the Springfield Victory Mission have been an asset within their neighborhood. She addressed that she feels that the residents of the Springfield Victory Mission has been very helpful within their neighborhood, such as delivering the Association newsletters and participating in neighborhood events, and reported that no task force was established for their neighborhood when this type of issue first arose in their area. Ms. Kuhns also expressed her disappointment regarding how tonight's meeting discussion was going.

Pauletta Dunn, President-Grant Beach Neighborhood Association, briefly explained that she doesn't feel that their neighborhood area has seen an increase regarding the issue of homelessness since the Victory Mission moved into their area. She reported that the Victory Mission residents and staff have always been helpful to the Association and has been willing to serve regarding their involvement in the neighborhood's activities/events. Ms. Dunn noted that she feels that the enclosed courtyard areas at the Victory Missions facility in Grant Beach have been helpful to keep the residents from gathering/loitering along the street area in the neighborhood.

Rorie Orgeron, Director-The Kitchen, Inc., briefly noted that The Kitchen, Inc. has added some services on/near the Commercial Street area to help address the issue of homelessness within the community, and no objections were made like the ones posed by the Task Force. He reported that The Kitchen, Inc. has a waiting list of over 140 families/individuals/children needing assistance/shelter at this time. Mr. Orgeron added that several of the individuals being served by the social service agencies, such as Springfield Victory Mission and The Kitchen, Inc. are local individuals, and from the community.

Mr. Ibarra noted that the Task Force would be conducting a Public Hearing in the near future, and encouraged anyone who was present during tonight's meeting to attend and to participate in the upcoming Public Hearing.

Due to the limited length of time remaining in the meeting, the Task Force asked Vern Morgan, Grants Administrator, to postpone his presentation until next week. Mr. Morgan affirmed.

Jack Pugh noted that he agreed with Mr. Davis regarding the issue of needing honest and open discussion.

Randy McCoy, Continuum of Care, briefly remarked that the issue of homelessness is "not a one way issue." He noted that there are issues that affect and target the homeless population, such as abuse and degradation, too.

Following further discussion, Mr. Ibarra thanked Mr. Harriger, and Mr. Sweeney for tonight's presentation.

With no further business, the Task Force meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 p.m.

Task Force Ground Rules

1. Everyone will participate, no one will dominate
2. Treat everyone with respect
3. Stick to the topics on the agenda, be concise
4. Ask if you don't understand
5. Work as a team player, share all information
6. Express disagreement openly
7. Consider other people's point of view
8. Speak one at a time as recognized by facilitator
9. Agree that it is OK to disagree and disagree without being disagreeable

COMMERCIAL STREET TASK FORCE

RE-REVISED SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS (as of September 8, 2009)

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2009 -INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

Speakers: Councilman Nick Ibarra, Director of Planning and Development, Ralph Rognstad

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, JULY 29, 2009 - COMMERCIAL STREET STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

Speaker: Olivia Hough, Senior Planner, Economic Development Division

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2009 – Meeting CANCELLED due to a scheduling conflict

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2009 - PLANNING AND ZONING ROLE AND FUNCTION

Speakers: Ralph Rognstad, Director of Planning and Development

Mike MacPherson, Principal Planner, Development Review

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 19, 2009 – Meeting CANCELLED due to a scheduling conflict

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2009 - TIF REDEVELOPMENT PLAN/CID

Speakers: Mike MacPherson, Principal Planner, Development Review Division

Rusty Worley, Executive Director, Urban District Alliance

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2009 – HISTORIC PRESERVATION ELEMENT

Speaker: Laura Derrick, Chairperson, Landmark's Board

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 2009 – VICTORY MISSION SOCIAL SERVICES STUDY

Speakers: Jim Harriger, Executive Director, Victory Mission

Jim Downing

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2009 – CONTINUUM OF CARE PRESENTATION

Speakers: Michelle Garand

Randy McCoy

Meeting location: Busch Municipal Building, L-45

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 23, 2009 – PUBLIC HEARING

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2009 – DISCUSSION FOR PROPOSAL

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21, 2009 – REVIEW OF FINAL DRAFT

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 2009 – FURTHER REVIEW AND DISCUSSION IF NECESSARY